

4 September 1979

Dear Bruce:

Thank you for giving me a look at Dick Lehman's thoughts as of early July. I have concluded some time ago that I do not have a good "feel" for organizational arrangements and how people will react to them, and these comments should be taken with that in mind. Moreover, I am not at all sure that organization is the primary problem with NFAC -- I suspect NFAC's trials and tribulations derive more from uncertainty about its purpose and the role of its products in the foreign affairs process. I have been struck by this especially on those occasions when we attempt analysis of a broad spectrum of developments or, by contrast, try to uncover the roots of some particular action, either forthcoming or just happened, by a foreign government. And I think this question of mission and role lies close to the heart of the calls for improving the quality of our "political analysis."

Thus I am a bit taken aback by the absence from Dick's pros and cons of much mention of how the products might be improved; maybe he has discussed this in the earlier memos he evidently has written. What he gives here seems focused on the reduction of bureaucratic and human frictions, which is a laudable objective. But it does not give me any real promise that the product will be better than it is now, although the process of production may be tidier.

I continue to believe that the conditions for good, useful analysis include

- people with strong substantive interests;
- a critical mass of such individuals which can be created and focused on a given project;
- a leavening of non-substantive critics who ask impolite questions about the project;
- a "ginger group" of people with special, demonstrated talents for analysis and exposition (not always in the same individual) who, by precept and example, suggest to both workers and leaders new ways to think about the project.

How you approach this in organizational detail I frankly don't know.

My present guess is that, in NFAC, certain essential functions need to be compartmented to some greater degree, the principal one being current intelligence defined as commentary on events as they occur or as they are perceived to be immediately forthcoming. The people responsible for "getting up" that commentary -- wherever it comes from originally -- should have that as their exclusive function; if they are skilled, the number need not be very large. Another essential function is watch and warning, again in the sense of "getting up" watch and warning statements of whatever kind seem most useful; this group, too, should have this as their exclusive job, and they, too, need not be many.

Beyond this, I would in general subscribe to Dick's recommendation of ultimately looking to organize NFAC along geographic lines, with special arrangements for the military/scientific people. I do think, for example, that OSR/RAD's elements dealing with Africa would be more useful in an African component overall than where they are now. Likewise the African elements of OER and OGCR, and maybe even OCR. Such arrangements would, I like to think, do more to provide the "critical mass" than does the present culture, which emphasizes country or regional "desks" in the non-Communist parts of OSR, OER, OPA, etc. I've been impressed with how much economists, geographers, militarists, and politicalists can contribute to each other when they are compelled to talk rather than coordinate.

As for my leavening of non-substantive critics, a really strong NFAC-wide editorial review staff, backed with a clear mandate from top management to ask questions as well as move commas, could do the kind of job I have in mind (to the undoubted accompaniment of endless bitching from the critical mass -- but good editing of the kind I am talking about should produce robust debate!). Incidentally, I wouldn't bother too much with editing the current intelligence bits, except for the PDB, which could be done as now by an essentially editorial sub-staff working from submissions which they or our leaders commission.

The "ginger group" seems to me to be the kind of people you have or should want to have in the NIOs, though not as many of them as at present. This is the group, failing anyone else, who should manage interagency papers as they do now, either nominating others or volunteering themselves to be principal drafters, but still in this capacity acting as the voices and mediators of the Community. They should also (and in many cases this would be more important) be charged with keeping the top management of the Agency and Community aware of new ways to look at intelligence problems of all kinds through papers of their own, and they should be recruited with this in mind. They should be free to roam the policy community, but should not specifically be soliciting tasking for NFAC; that should be the job of

the heads of the geographic/functional units. Nor should they have a direct role in NFAC production beyond participation in a semi-annual "production conference" or some such device.

Finally, the whole thing needs to be infused with a measured movement of people -- through NFAC, into it from outside, and from it to the outside. The intelligence business desperately needs a more directly informed constituency among the "political elite" -- in academia, Congress, journalism, the bureaucracy -- and we should try to help make this possible through our personnel and hiring practices. The chief of Dick's Africa/Latin America office, for example, could well be drawn from a fairly senior level of State; even a junior Ambassador like Andy Steigman might be recruited. The "ginger group" should be a very mixed bag -- of course people of stature and maturity, otherwise they cannot command your or the DCI's attention -- drawn from all sorts of places as well as from experienced hands in intelligence. (And while I think of it, one part of the "ginger group" should be a very small staff devoted to exploring and testing new analytical methods.)

So this likely is more than you wanted of my thoughts as of this morning. The essence is in the third paragraph; the rest is wandering mind. Good luck!!



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